

HEDGECONE AND THE RELEASE FROM ASSIGNED SERVICE

*A Critical Commentary on
HedgeCone by Viktor Genel
and the Practice of Deutilization*



HedgeCone 2013

Arteanity Digital Archive | Deutilization | HedgeCones

I THE CONE REMAINS RECOGNIZABLE

HedgeCone makes Deutilization visible through an object whose ordinary purpose is unusually legible. A traffic cone organizes movement by announcing a boundary, a hazard, or an instruction. In Viktor Genel's 2013 construction, thirty new cones radiate from a compact polyhedral body. Their familiar profiles persist, but the arrangement withdraws them from traffic control. The work asks how much of an object's identity belongs to its assigned service, and what becomes perceptible when that service is interrupted. [1]

The distinction matters because HedgeCone continues to do things. Its components carry loads, join surfaces, and respond to contact. Describing the work as the elimination of all function would obscure the physical capacities on which its construction depends. A more precise account locates Deutilization in the interruption of prescribed service. Capacities survive that interruption and become available for relations that the object's usual task had kept secondary.

The selection of new and functional components sharpens this proposition. HedgeCone does not begin with an exhausted object awaiting salvage. The cones are removed from service while still capable of fulfilling it. Their departure from prescribed service is therefore a decision within the work, rather than a consequence of prior wear. This gives the construction a different relation to ordinary material than an account based solely on recycling would provide. [1]

II GEOMETRY REORGANIZES THE COMPONENT

HedgeCone brings together thirty 18-inch traffic cones, sixty toilet-seat bolts and nuts, and an exercise ball. The cone bases occupy the square-face positions of a small rhombicosidodecahedral arrangement, with fasteners at its sixty vertex positions. This solid has thirty square faces alongside twenty triangular and twelve pentagonal faces. The construction uses the relation among these positions rather than pretending that the cones constitute a continuous solid surface. [1, 2]

The component acquires a different emphasis through this arrangement. A square base normally helps a cone stand; here it participates in the geometry of a larger body. A mounting fastener becomes a visible point of conjunction. The exercise ball appears through the openings as a central

sphere. These changes neither erase the manufactured objects nor make their previous identities irrelevant. Recognition allows the viewer to hold the component's ordinary role and its present structural relation together.

The photographs show a productive tension between the ideal figure and its industrial realization. Projecting cones obscure parts of the underlying polyhedron. Flexible surfaces and conspicuous fasteners prevent the structure from becoming an immaculate diagram. The viewer reconstructs its order through repetition, openings, and partial views. Geometry supplies a relation that can be named and repeated, while the chosen objects give that relation a particular scale, color, and material behavior.

III THE CONSTRUCTION MUST NEGOTIATE ITS MATERIALS

The July 2013 development posts show that geometric conception did not settle the problem of realization. On July 8, Genel reported that the cones were heavier and softer than expected and began bending after approximately one third had been assembled. On July 14, he described trials with pool noodles as internal reinforcement and the ordering of inflatable balls for support. These are records of engineering development; ordering two balls does not establish that two were present in the completed incarnation. [3]

A July 18 outdoor test introduced a further problem: direct sun softened the cones. Successful assembly was reported on July 22. The sequence makes the physical requirements of the work part of its intelligibility. Weight and flexibility are not incidental imperfections that can be removed from a conceptual account. They determine whether the proposed relations can persist in an actual construction. [4]

HedgeCone therefore qualifies a familiar shorthand in which conceptual art is treated as an idea indifferent to its embodiment. Here, the concept specifies a relation among manufactured things, and those things resist the proposed relation. Reinforcement can support the realization without cancelling Deutilization: it addresses material behavior after the original service has been interrupted. The work's engineering belongs to its conceptual stakes because a purely imagined polyhedron cannot expose this negotiation.

The subsequent report that HedgeCone had fallen from its pedestal and remained standing on its cones gives another view of that negotiation. A

component associated with standing individually now supports a collective body in an unplanned position. The incident records a particular event, rather than establishing universal stability or weather resistance. It also makes clear that an installation's circumstances can disclose capacities that were not the original reason for choosing its parts. [5]

IV THE WORK BEYOND ITS FIRST PRESENTATION

HedgeCone was presented on the Rose Kennedy Greenway at FIGMENT Boston in July 2013. The public setting placed its familiar industrial components within the urban environment from which their usual meaning derives. The assembled cones remained recognizable as street equipment while withdrawing from the regulation of traffic. [1]

The original HedgeCone subsequently received an award at the COOL exhibition at South Shore Art Center, reported on November 8, 2013. Its appearance at TEDx Somerville is documented separately by a placard photograph dated April 5, 2014. These are distinct presentations of HedgeCone, with different settings and documentary records. [6, 7]

HedgeCone also persists as the complete structural core of HedgeCone Rad. The expanded construction retains the earlier work rather than requiring its identity to disappear. This relationship gives the corpus a specific conceptual consequence: a physical construction can participate in two work identities without those identities becoming interchangeable.

HedgeCone's position within Deutilization rests on this persistence of relations. The cones retain their manufactured identity while departing from their assigned service. The geometric core retains its work identity while entering Rad. In both cases, alteration changes the conditions under which something appears without making everything it was disappear. What the work releases is the exclusivity of an assignment: the assumption that one prescribed role exhausts what the object can be.

SOURCES AND DOCUMENTATION

The references document historical and material statements. The critical readings developed from them are interpretive.

- [1] Viktor Genel, HedgeCone, Behance project and period project statement. The Google document HedgeCone on Rose Kennedy Greenway preserves the 2013 account. [Source](#)
- [2] Eric W. Weisstein, Archimedean Solid, MathWorld. Face and vertex counts for the small rhombicosidodecahedron. [Source](#)
- [3] Viktor Genel, HedgeCone first assembly attempt, July 8, 2013; HedgeCone first engineering breakthrough, July 14, 2013. [Source](#) [Engineering breakthrough](#)
- [4] Viktor Genel, HedgeCone The ultimate weather test, July 18, 2013; HedgeCone assembly success, July 22, 2013. [Source](#) [Weather test](#)
- [5] Viktor Genel, HedgeCone survived the night, July 28, 2013. [Source](#)
- [6] Viktor Genel, We won, November 8, 2013. Award at the COOL exhibition at South Shore Art Center. [Source](#)
- [7] Viktor Genel, HedgeCone TEDx Somerville placard. Flickr photographic record marked as taken and uploaded April 5, 2014. Documents a separate appearance from the COOL exhibition. [Source](#)